

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

20th August 2021

Dear Constance,

RE: STATUTORY SICK PAY

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP); your comments upon which I have read with interest.

SSP provides financial support to an employee when they are off work sick. Those on low pay may be able to receive additional help through the welfare system, depending on their personal circumstances. You may be aware that my colleagues in the Department for Work & Pensions have run a consultation containing a number of proposals aiming to reduce ill health-related job loss and support disabled people and those with health conditions to stay in, and thrive in, work. This includes proposals to reform SSP. A response to the consultation will be published in due course and I look forward to reading this. I would add that SSP is the legal minimum and many employees do receive more than this.

SSP is now payable from the first day of sickness absence (as opposed to day four) where an individual is sick, self-isolating, or shielding owing to COVID-19. Eligibility has also been extended to those told to self-isolate due to a member of a household (including linked or extended household) displaying symptoms, or testing positive for COVID-19, having been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or before being admitted to hospital prior to planned or elective surgery. These measures are in place to ensure that everyone is supported to do the right thing.

It is important to add that SSP is only one form of the wider support offer to help people in times of need. Where an employee's income is reduced while off sick and they require further financial support, they may be able to claim Universal Credit, as well as the new style Employment & Support Allowance.

Thank you also for inviting me to attend a briefing from the Trades Union Congress (TUC) on Thursday 15th July, which, owing to a prior parliamentary commitment, I was unfortunately unable to attend. However, please rest assured I shall keep right up-to-date on this matter.

Additionally, I am well aware of Mind's important campaign on reforming SSP. As I mentioned, DWP Ministers are exploring reforms to ensure SSP supports employees who need it. Proposals include allowing the system to better accommodate phased returns, widening eligibility for SSP to those on the lowest incomes, and introducing measures to increase compliance. I eagerly await the Government's response.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE